



YOUR LOVE. YOUR HEALTH. OUR HELP.



Reproductive and Sexual Health

Sex can complicate things.

Responsible sex can be a wonderful thing. But if you engage in risky sexual behavior, you can experience sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies. Additional consequences of risky sexual behavior can include pain and suffering, embarrassment and lifelong health, relationship and financial issues. That's why the Health Promotion and Wellness Department of the Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center works to reduce the occurrence of STIs, HIV infections and unplanned pregnancies among Sailors and Marines. We offer practical tools, educational resources and prevention strategies that can help you, your partner and your family remain sexually and reproductively healthy.

Let's talk about sex.

Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease or dysfunction. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

Risky sexual behavior has serious repercussions in the Navy. Between 1985 and 2011, at least 5,800 active duty Sailors and Marines were infected with HIV. In 2011, over 5,000 cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea or syphilis were diagnosed among active duty Sailors and Marines. Although the incidence of Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV) is unknown, 205 active duty female Sailors and Marines were diagnosed with cervical cancer from 2001-2005 (HPV is believed to cause 90% of cervical cancer).

Protect yourself.

It's important to practice safe sex for your health. In 2008, only half of unmarried, active duty males in the Navy and Marine Corps

reported using a condom the last time they had sex. In addition, only one in three unmarried, active duty females said a condom was used during recent intercourse. Condoms can be used along with other forms of birth control to reduce the risk of an unintended pregnancy and prevent STIs.

In 2010, two in three enlisted females in the Navy said her last pregnancy while in the Navy was unplanned. Of those, half said that they were not using protection when the pregnancy occurred. Among the females who were using contraception at the time of their unplanned pregnancy, about half were using birth control pills. Oral contraceptives can be an effective method to prevent unintended pregnancy, when used correctly.

Prevention is possible.

The good news is that STIs, HIV and unplanned pregnancies are mostly preventable if you practice safe sex. The following options can reduce your risk:

- ▶ Get vaccinated against Human Papillomavirus (HPV).
- ▶ Say no to sex or delay sex until another time in your life.
- ▶ Talk with your doctor about the most effective contraception options for your lifestyle and needs.
- ▶ Use your chosen contraceptive option correctly.
- ▶ Establish and be faithful in a long-term, mutually-monogamous relationship.
- ▶ Use condoms correctly and every time.
- ▶ Talk with your doctor about routine screening for early detection of HIV, chlamydia and other STIs.
- ▶ Use a buddy system when going out to prevent alcohol and sex related incidents.

For assistance regarding your sexual health, contact your health care provider or visit your military treatment facility.



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